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By- Miller, S.M.

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROSPECTS OF THE POOR.

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This conference paper points out underlying assumptions about current social events and relates contemporary actions to ultimate goals. Attention is drawn to a broader view of economic, social, and political factors and to the need for shifting from an examination of poverty to a critical awareness of the issues of inequality. Also discussed is the significance of "institutional changes in education and social service organizations." Within this frame of reference, the paper is concerned with the "rediscovery" of poverty in the United States, the nonincome factors affecting economic position, the significance of education, and the development of a "diploma elite." The issues of political participation and political pressure are also discussed. It is felt that social scientists can provide perspectives and a focus for these problems. The reactions of several conference participants to this paper are included. (NH)

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Dr. S. M. Miller:

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROSPECTS OF THE POOR

First let me tell you something of my perspective on what is happening in civil rights in the United States because this perspective covers many of the points that I will be making. It seems to me that the civil rights movement in our country has come to a turning point, or at least to a slowing down. What it lacks to a large extent is a national program, including a national economic program, a national educational program, a national social program, and a position on the poverty programs.

For example, I think that the poverty programs in the United States would be quite different in content and effectiveness today if the civil rights movement had taken the position of constant critic and monitor of the programs. The absence of such a critical group has led to the watering down of the poverty efforts.

More generally, it is important now for the civil rights movement to generate national programs which will provide direction for the United States today. We must begin to more carefully think through the kinds of programs which are important for accelerating integration in American society.

Another problem is the failure of civil rights groups to organize low-income Negroes, particularly in Northern ghettoes, as an active, articulate, conscious and effective political group. Furthermore, I suspect that it won't happen until we have national programs which begin to take root in the communities, which have some concrete significance, and which are elaborated in terms of community needs. And so I see a much closer connection between

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the development of a national program and the development of community programs.

I think political power will grow out of a national program which musters some coalition strength from other groups, and out of Negro and white low-income groups' development as important new political constituencies in communities throughout this country. That's the perspective from which I will be talking today.

Let me add one point and then go on to a discussion of some current problems. I think most of us would agree that the civil rights movement has had an impact in our society which goes far beyond the issues of civil rights. The shakeup in education -- though inadequate -- has been pushed forward by issues raised by the civil rights movement.

The caliber, quality, adequacy and delivery of social services in the United States have been issues largely raised by the civil rights efforts. In one area after another, I think, important questions, long neglected, have been disinterred by civil rights activities. In attempting to improve the position of Negroes, the movement has borne the additional burden of simultaneously attempting to change American society.

The problem, to some extent, is that other groups have not been moving in the same direction as the civil rightists. I think what's going to become important in the future is the extent to which the movement can get support from other kinds of institutional forces toward large-scale change.

The "Rediscovery" of Poverty

Let me turn now to a discussion of poverty, then to issues of inequality, and then to some political implications of this analysis.

The rediscovery of poverty in our country was so overwhelming that we tended not to understand what it was that we were so disturbed about. It was enough to say that we hadn't realized the poor were in our midst; that twenty per cent were living in "Other America." It was enough to point out the horrors of living poor in an affluent society.

Yet we did not seem to understand what was new about poverty in this country, and what it reflected about American society. People from other countries have pointed out, quite correctly, that the poverty that we're talking about is quite different from the poverty they have known.

The poverty of the hundreds of thousands who sleep on the streets in India is not known in the United States. The incidence of people who are dying each year from malnutrition in many -- if not most -- countries in the world is relatively insignificant in our society.

Our poverty is not a subsistence poverty in the sense that people are dying because they are poor. Our poor have higher mortality rates than those who are more fortunate, but survival is not the essence of the problem.

The problem in American is that the standards of various groups have not kept pace with rising economic standards. When we speak about low income we are really talking about lagging income in American society.

The most striking economic fact of the last twenty years has been the spectacular achievement of affluence resulting from the great growth of the American economy. Fears of a depression which followed World War II have been dissolved. Instead, we fell into an euphoria of affluence, believing that we were solving our social problems while we were moving toward a higher gross national product.

The rediscovery of poverty made us aware that some groups in American

soceity were falling behind; they weren't moving as rapidly as other groups in the society; the gaps within the social pyramids had widened for those at the bottom.

From our present perspective we face the possibility that we can never completely solve the poverty problem. We now view poverty as being relative to particular standards. As these standards change we always face the prospect that some groups are going to lag behind. Obviously those of low education are much more likely to fall behind than those of high education. Victims of continuing discrimination are more likely to fall behind. Those who live in depressed areas also are greater poverty risks.

Negroes are especially vulnerable to poverty because of their history of discrimination as well as their economic and educational position. Therefore, among our tasks, is the reduction of Negroes' poverty and the development of a society which is much more sensitive to poverty issues; a society which recognizes vulnerable groups and attempts to do something about reducing poverty.

The rediscovery of poverty was followed by an inadequate appreciation of the scope of the problem. We have been deluded by the economist's talking about gross national product without adequately considering the composition of the product -- whether it consists of building war machines or increasing the distribution of cigarettes and alcohol rather than building public facilities.

Non-Income Factors Affecting Economic Security

Nowadays one's standard of living increasingly consists of things which are not easily measured by annual income. A worker's economic position largely

depends upon fringe benefits. Twenty per cent of U. S. wages goes for such benefits as pension plans, health insurances or welfare programs of one kind or another. So, in comparing incomes, fringe benefits must be considered. A low-paid policeman, for example, may have a pension plan which can retire him at half-pay in 20 years, something nobody else can do in our society. Such social security benefits can be thought of as accumulative assets, an index of one's future status. In other words, those who have good pension plans are going to live better after 65 than those without them.

Another index of economic security lies in the realm of public services, such as the availability and utilization of schools, medical services and recreational facilities. For example, if you live in a community which has bad public schools and someone else lives in a community with better public schools, you are worse off than the other person. Thus we have to get away from the old-fashioned notion of talking about income only in the narrow sense of the weekly pay check.

In sum, not enough attention has been paid to the poverty of pension and the poverty of public services as well as the poverty of income in American society. The task will be to redress this imbalance and to recognize the poverty of public services as well as the inequality in public services.

Not enough research has been devoted to the barriers and resistances to the utilization of services. It is said that poor people are not interested in the various services offered to them -- that they are "hard to reach." Yet the experience of the poverty programs has indicated that every time a reasonably meaningful service is offered -- and a real effort is made to get people to know about and utilize it -- the service has been flooded with demands.

Now why aren't there more fully used services? How do you prevent

differential utilization of services, such as the British health service which tends to be a subsidy to the middle class rather than a boon to the working class? Problems of this kind need much more attention than we've given them.

The Significance of Education

Implicit in our discussion is the significance of education because of the correlation between education and income. But more than that -- education is a passport to acceptance into the mainstream of the society. One's education increasingly determines how one is treated by neighbors, private employers, and public bureaucracies. Contrary to the popular view, Negroes have a fantastic interest in education, much greater than whites at anywhere near comparable income levels....Why do Negroes have so much interest in education? I submit that one of the reasons is that many Negroes recognize that education is protection; you have a better chance of being treated decently if you are educated than if you're not.

Another aspect of this: With education you learn how to operate more effectively in the vast development of bureaucracies in the society. Thus to live in America you have to be a "con" man to the extent that you have to know how to manipulate and how to react; how to apply pressure and how to resist various groups and professionals -- lawyers, accountants, school systems -- who often attempt to make decisions that should be made by the individual citizen. It follows that individuals who lack education are socially as well as economically deprived. Education, then, means something about a person's way of life, the goods he can get out of life, and the satisfactions and protections he can build around himself.

Political Participation

The issue of political rights exceeds the right to vote for public officials. It also involves the right of the individual to determine the extent to which other persons and organizations should impinge upon himself and his community. This broader meaning was seen in events following the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Three fateful words -- maximum feasible participation -- were slipped into the Act. These words were interpreted to mean that the poor should be involved in the development, operation and conduct of the programs which impinge upon them.

Now you can argue -- as I personally do not -- that participation by the poor does something for the poor. I am willing to accept that possibility, but it also seems to me that participation involves important political implications; poor people as well as middle class people have certain political rights in relationship, say, to the welfare system of the United States, to the social service bureaucracies of the United States, to City Hall, and to the education systems. In addition, the poor have certain rights of grievance, certain rights of determination, certain rights of decision making.

These are the new forms of political rights which are coming to the fore in our society. An individual is poor politically in the United States when he does not have these new political rights; when he does not have the rights that a person needs in a suburb to effect the kind of decisions which take place there.

The argument about maximum feasible participation, then, is not one of whether participation would make ghetto residents feel better about a poverty program. It's essentially a political issue of recognizing the changes which

have taken place in the United States and providing the 20th century equivalent of the 19th century effort to enfranchise the working class, providing new ways of protecting the poor against other groups in society and effecting the kinds of decisions which the welfare state makes in relationship to the poor.

I think the questions raised by maximum feasible participation -- and the fantastic responsiveness to it in Negro ghettoes -- will result in one of the great political issues of the next decade. That this process is unsuspecting in its evolution indicates that Congress really did not have any idea of what it was passing at the time.

I think eventually we are going to talk about what we mean by integration -- in terms of reducing social distances. To some extent, the poor are poor because they are separated from the rest of American society. They do not have a chance to relate to others. The inhumanity of social distance based on race and class will eventually become a political issue.

I am suggesting that we have to have a much broader concept of the issues, particularly those which concern the plight and future of Negroes in the United States. In American society it will be inadequate, I submit, for the income of Negroes to go up while the income of whites goes up more rapidly making the gap between them greater than it has been before. World War II reduced the gap in income between Negroes and whites in our country. In recent years the gap has probably widened again.

The Development of a 'Diploma Elite'

In our society we have developed essentially a "diploma elite" of college graduates whose income moves up more rapidly than any other group. All indi-

cators point to a widening of the division between college graduates and the rest of society. The varied routes to success -- for example, working one's way up through the ranks of business -- have been narrowed down to one highway, the highway of education. And if you are a casualty along this highway, your chances of getting a decent income or a decent position are largely eliminated. That is a stark statement, but it reflects what is taking place here.

Moreover, we have a society that has fallen into a credentials trap. We do not evaluate people on the basis of performance; we rate them by their educational credentials. Many people are automatically ruled out because they lack credentials. School systems operate to sort people out rather than to include people in. I suggest three ways to combat credentialism: The first is to consider abilities other than a talent for managing the school system in awarding a decent job. On-the-job training should be emphasized. We should employ people first, then help them to learn the job.

The second way is to give people additional chances to stay in school. It is assumed that the way to get an education is to go through 12, 16 or 20 consecutive years, picking up certificates and diplomas along the way. Those who fall out are not helped to get back into the system.

Instead, we should allow people to leave and re-enter the system, rather than permanently exclude those who are once out. So we have to talk about real second chances, and real third and real fourth chances, by providing financial subsidies for people to go back to school. We have to adapt the school to meet the needs of returnees.

At New York University, for example, we are experimenting with a plan for helping nonprofessionals -- some of whom have not finished high school --

get their credentials. First, they are given jobs as teacher's and social worker's aids. They are given classroom credits for experience, and they take courses related to their work. Ultimately, they receive diplomas and degrees.

If we consider some of the poverty programs as new routes to credentials, is is my guess that the employability of graduates of the Job Corps, Neighborhood Youth Corps, and Manpower and Development Training Act programs is not because of specific skills they picked up in their training, but because they have shown their willingness to go through this wringer of further training. Employers are accepting this as the equivalent of the socialization experience that a high school diploma mostly represents today. Thus, these poverty programs become new markers of social and educational acceptability; new routes for social mobility. Yet those who can not manage the new routes are further stigmatized.

The third way to combat credentialism is to restructure jobs. The continuing shortage of professionals and the increasing demands for their services would indicate that we are never going to produce enough of them by the conventional ways.

To provide neglected social services, non-professionals are needed to help such persons as teachers, nurses and social workers. In order to do this, we will have to restructure jobs now, so that lesser-trained people can move up into them and develop proficiency on the job. As rapid changes take place in job structure, training before the job becomes less and less meaningful.

Putting Pressure on "the System"

Let me return now to the political side of what I have been talk about. In

any kind of education or social welfare organization, you have an underground; that is, you have some people within who are sympathetic to the idea of changing the organization, such as a teacher who knows that the children are not getting a decent break, or a principal who knows that the school superintendent has allocated funds so that Negro and low-income youth are not getting a fair share.

These dissidents exert pressure within the system. For this pressure to be maximized there has to be organized pressure from without.

One problem is that we have not developed critical publics of American education. If civil rightists want to have a major impact upon school systems, I think that civil rights groups at local levels in the United States should know more about what's going on in the schools than those inside; they should know the local issues and know how to connect these with national educational issues.

On some issues it may be possible to develop fairly broad-based coalitions to effect better social services as well as schools. In the South, the white poor and the Negro poor may eventually move together. In terms of public welfare, whites and Negroes have common problems. On a programmatic basis, social welfare professionals might be brought together to effect the welfare system.

The job of research would be to select issues which would bring to the fore a diversity of groups to apply external political pressure.

These efforts, I feel, should increasingly center around the effort to reduce inequality. Reduction of inequality means a redistribution of present and future resources. That makes the struggle more difficult, because it means someone's going to gain more than somebody else. If this redistribution

is to be realized, effective political organization becomes more focal than ever before.

In some ways the political possibilities of organization in the South may be greater than they are in Northern ghettoes. The politics of these ghettoes is often dominated by old-line political leaders, such as Congressman Dawson in Chicago. In the ghetto, it is difficult for new leadership to emerge that is more informed, more critical, more action-oriented than the old. In the South it may be possible -- although I do not really know -- for communities which had very limited political activity to be much freer in political outlook and organization than the ghetto wards, where politics is attached to old-line leadership and machines.

The South also may have the advantage of being less susceptible to credentialism than industrialized sections as the Northeast, where credentialism has become a widespread disease.

The Role of the Social Scientist

Let me turn finally to the role of the social scientist. It seems to me that by and large one of the things we fail to do is to teach professionals how to be effectively connected with action organizations, and to teach action organizations how to effectively use professionals. This may mean that the professional contribution is not so much a program as it is a way of thinking.

I am often called, for example, to places where I'm terribly embarrassed to go because I am very uninformed, as on the South. Then I get pressured and I go. I find that what I can contribute is a way of thinking about an issue, even though I may be uninformed about some important aspects. I can

usually say, "Shouldn't we think about at least this aspect of it?" And I'm able to make a contribution because I've gone through a fairly systematic experience of raising certain kinds of issues as a result of my personal training, experience and outlook.

Similarly, I think a social scientist should not necessarily provide an agenda or program, but offer a perspective or pose pertinent questions. "What have we been neglecting here?" he might ask, or "Why are we paying insufficient attention to a particular national program?" In this context, the social scientist does not come in with a program and say, "Here, take it." He has to win the acceptance of the activists.

Thus a part of the talent of being a researcher who can relate to action organizations is to be accepted by them and to interact effectively with them. The very act of winning confidence is an important aspect of the role of the social scientist in action. I think that it is something that we must look at from both sides -- from the side of the social scientist and from the side of the activist.

What I have done in this widely ranging effort to relate today to tomorrow is to point out the underlying assumptions of what is taking place today; to relate our contemporary actions to the ultimate goals; to broaden our view of economic, social and political factors; to turn from an examination of poverty to the critical awareness of the issues of inequality; and to make us recognize the significance of institutional changes in education and social service organizations.

These views should be stressed because I think the civil rights groups do not understand how significant they are in American society. If civil

rights groups had played a stronger role in the poverty program, for instance, they could have magnified the impact of the program.

We are in a time of ferment -- a time of great excitement for social scientists. There has been a stalemate on a variety of fronts, but the potential for action is here. And my belief is that the great development of social science will come from its effort to learn and to inform people about the problems of poverty, inequality and civil rights.

We should try to freshly and critically examine these problems and begin to talk about them, not only in terms of the social science implications, but in their strategic possibilities for action.

The possibilities are great. The task is ours.

Dr. Hylan Lewis:

RESPONSE TO DR. MILLER'S REMARKS

...In preparing my comments, I was secure in the knowledge that I would likely confirm and, if permitted, echo most of what Dr. Miller would have to say about the economic and political prospects of the poor. I have heeded the conference planners' direction that my response should be programmatically oriented; that it should be in keeping with the major objective of the conference -- "to discuss various roles that social scientists can play in achieving social change that will lead to the full integration and democratization of our society."

I am pleased that the language says "various roles that social scientists can play" because (1) it suggests that there is a range of tasks that are appropriate to the social scientist as an intellectual in our society, and (2) because it covers the thought that the social scientist as an individual necessarily is called on to play a number of roles at the same time -- roles that are not necessarily compatible or that can be successfully compartmentalized. If the social scientist is at all alive, his existence and any designs for effectiveness he might have are necessarily marked by tension and conflict.

What Dr. Miller and practically all of the participants in this conference are saying is that social science, for whatever else it might purport to be, is now in the context of the current day problems we are talking about, probably more than ever, at once a set of activities and products with direct moral and political consequences. Probably the first task of the social scientist is to realize this, and to come to terms with the implications it bears for the

discipline, his person, his career and the society, not to mention the people about whom he talks and with whom he attempts to do things. And this is not a research problem, although the scientist's orientation can be of help -- particularly these parts that stress examining the evidence systematically and a sense of responsibility for the uses made of one's brain children. It can be of help precisely where it counts most -- that is, in enhancing the ability of all people, poor and non-poor, to effect events.

The ability to effect events is basically a matter of politics and power -- defined both broadly and narrowly. Therefore, one question we have to address ourselves to is "What can social science tell us about?" -- What are social scientists doing about improving the ability of the poor, of the Negro and white poor in the cities, in the persistent pockets of rural poverty, to effect events, to increase their options, to increase their power?

I'd like to quote and paraphrase a bit from the observations of Jose L. Aranguren, a distinguished Spanish social scientist, about politics and morality in our time. He says:

> Experience has taught us that good wishes and good intentions -- that is to say, morality -- are not strong enough in themselves to have an appreciable effect on the course of events...the manifestoes of intellectuals who are given to making appeals to collective conscience and so forth, serve as "tranquilizers"...A strictly ethical-intellectual point of view is generally blind to the sociological, economic, scientific, and technical forces which condition morality.

One of the roles of the social scientist, then, is to open our eyes to the forces which condition morality and importantly to the consequences of the social science "fact," and allegations that often have the force of invidious moral judgements.

Professor Aranguren adds:

> ...we may...broach the problem in terms of an essential tension between morality and politics...Politics has its roots in reality; and both as individual behavior and as a structure, it is made up of a series of data which are not static, but powerfully dynamic, a play of forces which it is necessary to abide by if one really wants to play the game of politics...[The relation between morality, politics, and social science] is a relation always filled with tension, a dramatic relation...the source of the problem, lies here...[We are dealing with a problem] not of tragedy, but of drama. Tragedy occurs when an unavoidable [fate] hovers over us and we can not escape it, cannot act in any other way. Drama, on the other hand, exists when it is possible to effect events, when there is room for sudden changes of circumstances and for freedom...

We might say that an important transformation began -- or rather was stepped up at Montgomery a decade ago. Montgomery was a watershed event that brought a change in the status of the Negro, and of the contemporary poor, from that of tragedy to that of drama -- from intricate defensive maneuvering with fate, to doing something about freedom.

If social science and social scientists are to help us "to come to grips with the forces which condition our lives politically, economically, socially," and in other ways as well, it must function inside their frame of reference. We must have a social science "within the situation" rather than "of the situation."

Social science research must help us take into account the concrete forces which condition us and then help decide what actions are practicable. Actions should always be carried out on a basis of an objective study, or appraised of the situation we are in. Social science can help emphasize that the various situations the poor find themselves in now are neither purely arbitrary nor purely deterministic. It has been said, for example, that "it is we ourselves (and importantly "we" includes the poor now more than ever) -- acting within our given situation to change history -- who are history."

This dynamic and satisfying view of people being history when they act to change events comes forcefully through in the front page stories in last night's *Washington Evening Star*. The headlines and the secondary captions for the lead story said:

Mrs. Wallace Sweeps Alabama

Wins Primary Despite Record Negro Turnout

Flowers Loses, But Rights Drive Gaining in Some Local Races

The second feature by the prize-winning reporter, Haynes Johnson, carried these even more apt captions:

"Yes Sir, It's History" (a quote from a Negro voter)

Selma Was Extra Polite But Tense

And, significantly the story began:

> Few surprises, no incidents of violence reported, but everywhere an exaggerated politeness and underneath, tension. That was Selma and the black belt of Alabama yesterday.

Now one of the key words here is tension. It suggests that another of the tasks of social scientists is to help people understand the differences between tension, as an accompaniment of change, and tension as a residual of frustration and despair. The relation of tension to personal awareness and to a heightened sense of personal identity and growth -- to mental health -- are related matters of importance. Related problems that are heightened and involve the resurgence of ethnicity and its relation to authenticity. Social scientists might be able to illuminate some of these problems without much, if any, additional conventional research.

And this latter observation suggests that in many instances the primary and most relevant task of the social scientist in the areas of race, poverty, and politics might be to help devise new and more efficient means of utilization

and dissemination of existing knowledge rather than to seek new data, and to design new research problems. And it might very well be that the most important attribute the social scientist has in this context is not so much his knowledge -- which by definition is a little suspect, is inclined to get stale, is sometimes surprisingly provincial and limited, and is always subject to distortion and misuse -- but rather his methodology; his orientation to process rather than conditions, his way of always asking questions about presumed facts about the situations he is in, and his habit of always seeking better answers. Why not apply this stance to practical as well as laboratory and more academic problems?

The social scientist can help understanding and the chances of change for the poor by emphasizing the importance of persons and their representatives knowing the system (or systems) -- developing a full systems view -- of how decisions are made, and asking such questions as these: What are the options? What affects the number and kinds of options the system offers? What are the levers that can be used to manipulate the system? The social scientist can also help induce understanding and change by stressing the view that the process rather than the condition is important, and that in making demands of the system the principle rather than the immediate gain is the important thing.

Dr. Miller has elaborated on this latter in the first of his "Informal Notes." [An outline which was distributed to respondents before the conference]:

> ...an important thing (is) to handle grievances so that they establish principles. This is the trade union outlook. In emphasizing the emergence of principles, we reduce the possibilities of being called out by an action that deals with an immediate situation but has no longer term or more general impact.
>
> The needed orientation is to deal with the grievances of the poor so that they lead to the enlarging of the legal rights of the

> poor, rather than only ameliorating the situation of those few individuals involved...

Stressed here is the role of the social scientists as an intellectual in helping people at all levels to look now at their lives, their situations, their problems, the things that impinge on them in new and different ways. New perspectives and stances are needed; stances that are not only consonant with the realities of change, but that also promise more support to efforts to change events.

In this context, comprehension of the effects of two related recent developments is of great importance as we consider what social scientists can do to help affect the life chances and options of the urban and rural poor, Negro and white. These developments are related to the emergence of the concepts of expanding power and of the re-emphasis upon the effective local participation as a means to power-sharing. These developments reflect the effects of far-reaching recent changes in technology, and in political and economic processes; they are now the over-riding factors that affect the chances of the poor, for more goods, for more participation and more freedom where they are -- or where they might want to go.

The best statement of the significance of this concept of expanding power and the politics of it comes from the January 1966 article in *Fortune* by Max Ways, "Creative Federalism and the 'Great Society'." He wrote:

> There's much more to L.B.J.'s domestic policies than meets the eye. Government is learning from modern business that, when it comes to problem solving, power belongs out where the know-how is...U. S. History is making a major turn from the politics of issues to the politics of problems, from an emphasis on need to an emphasis on opportunity, from struggle over the redistribution of what we have to the less crude and more intricate decisions about what we might become.
>
> Creative federalism starts from the...belief that total power -- private and public, individual and organizational -- is expanding

> very rapidly. As the range of conscious choice widens, it is possible to think of vast increases of Federal government power that do not encroach upon or diminish any other power. Simultaneously, the power of state and local governments will increase; the power of private organizations including businesses will increase; and the power of individuals will increase.

Aside from the new vistas for all citizens that are opened up by the concept and fact of expanding power, there is still the question of how to eliminate the differential needs and the differential access to many of the Negro poor. Expanding power immediately adds new dimensions and short-run implications to old problems of the Negro poor.

Lest we think the millenium is really at hand, rather than the end to a tortuous process, Martin Rein calls attention to one aspect of the problem in his comments on the dual delivery system of health, education, and welfare services. This too is something that needs monitoring and debate by social scientists and policy makers. Here is his statement:

> Melvin Glasser...charges that the new medical assistance program in Title XIX of the Social Security Act will segregate the poor by maintaining them in a "separate but less equal" medical care system. Few will deny the charge. But pragmatists have sought to neutralize the trenchant criticism by arguing in support of a politics of welfare incrementalism which exploits present political opportunities and seeks to change the deficiencies of the system with resources at hand...In the anti-poverty program we have established, as Tilman has perceptively observed, "separate and differential programs for the poor as a definable class" rather than channeling our resources "through established, socially approved, normal institutions." Those rejected by those programs (Job Corps, Head Start, etc.) may find it difficult to escape the invidious label of "non-deserving."

In seeking solutions to problems such as these, there is a need to reexamine the demand for an increasing measure of effective localism in relation to the Negro's and the poor's participation and sharing. The changes that we subsume under the phrase "Negro Revolution" and supported in part by new laws have helped change the intricate calculus of local and national

power and participation. One result has been the re-emphasis upon local, political and economic participation at the same time Federal action and intervention has increased. The question of deciding which functions and activities to centralize and which to decentralize is a tactical or operational rather than a basic research question. Similarly the question of developing and supporting the local political and business leadership among Negroes is now coming to be as important as money or influence. Washington is essentially a how-to-do-it problem. In Mississippi and Alabama and in urban ghettoes there is considerable evidence that the people themselves are seeking ways of achieving this -- and sometimes in desperation and quite frequently with little or no help from social scientists.

One dimension of the problem is supported in Foster Davis' *Reporter* piece: "The Delta: Rich Land Poor People." He wrote:

> Economics is supplementing race as the basic problem in the Mississippi Delta, a fact that was conspicuous in both last May's tenant strike and the January squat-in. The air-base demonstration was not after the right to eat in a white restaurant. They in effect were saying that they had no money even to eat in a Negro restaurant.

If any research is needed here it is feasibility research that documents or demonstrates new and imaginative ways of generating jobs and services, of maintaining family stability, and providing local participation in political and economic decisions.

In any event, social science attention needs to be given immediately to interpreting and monitoring the effects of a new dynamic balance, or better the quality of inter-action between a new emphasis upon effective localism for low income Negroes and whites -- in rural and urban settings -- and what has been called the new creative federalism -- to look at how the current expansion of power and wealth is being experienced and shared at the local level.

Obviously, it is useless to talk about research without talking about better evaluation, storage of research results, retrieval, dissemination, and utilization of research products; it is also clear that it is necessary to consider such problems as research support, organization leadership, management and personnel. One of the most critical needs is to come up with ways of compensating for the serious lack of research manpower and resources available in that area.

There are many roles research can play in these matters -- tactical and operational, basic investigation, monitoring, evaluation, education and as a complement to other functions. The important point is that the role of the researcher in this area not only must be carried out in concert it must also be reflective of, responsive to, and have something to say about what goes on in the situation or system.

One possible way of providing and institutional setting or base for the complex of change-stimulating, change-guiding, change-monitoring, and change-interpreting functions and agents all of which research is but a part is to organize on or near some university campus in the South (Atlanta is a likely place) an institute, center or academy that might combine selected features of the Rand Corporation, the Center for Democratic Institutions, Washington's Institute of Policy Studies, and the University of Chicago's new Academy for Policy Studies, for example. Such a center would provide a base and setting for the association and effort of researchers and scholars, non-academic experts, and policy makers -- and a forum for the examination of major issues of poverty, race, power, and the new localism. Importantly, a center also would permit the use of the task force principle to achieve the most flexible and

efficient use of scarce human talent.

To repeat, power is where the know-how is. One of the most important contributions some social scientists could make would be to come forth with efficient ways of organizing and deploying available know-how, particularly in and to local communities as needed. A series of task forces operating out of or in relation to a center is one way of getting the most out of a mobile, task-oriented unit; getting the most out of diffused specialized talents; and of getting a specific local focus. An effective local focus and application is the best guarantee that any preoccupation with process itself and with efficient economical organization are not more important than people. The purpose of all this -- and especially in the social sciences -- is to enhance the lives, the participation, the power, and freedom of people at the local level. In the short run, and in the context of this conference, this probably calls more for new systems of utilizing available social science talent, and disciplined experience and knowledge, than it does for new research. In the intermediate and long run it calls for a drastic revamping of social science training and research emphasis if they are to have relevance to people and the ways in which they acquire and use power and freedom.

Dr. Vivian W. Henderson:

RESPONSE TO DR. MILLER's REMARKS

Economic prospects of the poor are closely tied to other factors under discussion during this conference. There is one aspect of economic conditions, however, which somewhat projects itself above other conditions. Without economic viability and without some semblance of economic security individuals and families are without options. This rather subtle fact is crucial to the whole scheme of social processes. Without options individuals are without opportunity, they are without hope, and there is little reason to expect them to venture and to seek out what appears to the more fortunate to be opportunities afforded by the expanding economy and affluent society.

...Economic prospects are part of a chain composed of several links, some known and some unknown. Together they make up a circle of causal factors that culminate in a condition of poverty. They function to generate change in the social process and determine prospects for the poor.

To view prospects, it is necessary to talk in terms of time. There are long-run prospects and there are short-run prospects. Likewise, it is necessary to place the poor in components and disaggregate them in some measure according to characteristics and factors which we know to be sources and determinants of poverty. The data show, for example, that whites have better prospects for moving out of poverty than Negroes; that the higher the level of educational achievement, the greater the prospects of escaping poverty; that households and families with female heads are more likely to remain in poverty than those with male heads. Certain industries and occupations are

conducive to generating and perpetuating poverty even where people are employed every day, full time in them.

I have one or two projections on prospects for the Negro poor; and, second, I have one or two comments on the role of social scientists in social change. Before mentioning these, I should like to make a quick comment on Professor Miller's outline. In his outline, Professor Miller has addressed himself primarily to an expansion of definition of poverty and its measurement. He correctly states that the economic position should be defined not only in terms of income, but should include other factors which offer an index of *command* over resources. These would include pensions, housing and other types of assets; and, second, poverty should be defined by the availability, utilization and quality of public services of one kind or another including health services, educational and transportation services. Further, it is suggested by Professor Miller that we must extend the idea of economic position to recognize the issue of personal autonomy and political control.

I see these facets of poverty in terms of disproportion in benefits derived from the social and economic processes by individuals in the form of income, wealth and access to services in contrast to disproportions in burdens shouldered.

I do not argue with Professor Miller regarding inclusion of factors beyond income in the question of poverty. On the other hand I do question whether it makes much difference as to what is included beyond income when it comes to poverty. *Income is the most satisfactory statistic to indicate the composite of economic condition. There is no other statistic which summarizes so well in a single form individual or family economic status.* In

the overwhelming majority of statistical series, assets in the form of pensions and housing will add only insignificantly to the measurement of poverty....At the same time I am aware of the significance these factors may hold for understanding the dimensions of the problem. But this point in Professor Miller's paper does not disturb me greatly. A second point does.

Professor Miller suggests that we can never solve poverty for the reason that as shifting lines change which define position in society some groups -- more so than others -- are likely to lag behind. I gather he ties this point to the issue of inequality; therefore, prospects for the poor, economically speaking, is not just a question of correcting poverty, but more important correcting inequality.

There are relationships between poverty and inequality. They do overlap. It seems to me, however, that for most purposes a rather sharp line should be drawn between poverty and inequality. This is particularly true when considering objectives of corrective action and public policy.

Poverty questions address themselves to standards regardless of positions others may hold in the society. Inequality emphasizes distribution. The question in one instance involves strategy for upgrading the poor to standards of decent living, generating improvements, and, even assuming shifts in various income lines, sustaining the gains through time. Moving from inequality to equality on the other hand is a function of narrowing differences between groups and how they share in the returns from production. I realize that we have a serious problem of distribution in this country, and that a route to correcting poverty is to correct inequality. I don't think, however, correction of inequality is a necessary prerequisite to correcting poverty.

...For example, we know that today a job for every person in the working age population at a minimum wage of say $2 per hour would lift millions out of poverty. I doubt, however, that such would correct problems of inequality in income distribution or inequality in the distribution of benefits from the abundant society....In all probability a $2 minimum wage would push all wages up.

I think in other words that when we look at prospects for the poor, the issue is much less that of inequality and more that of poverty and failure to generate conditions and implement policies to get at those forces which tend either to perpetuate people in poverty or which impede the process by which people leave poverty.

I suggest we can correct poverty whether we correct inequality or not. While some poverty may be unavoidable in the short run; the greatest proportion of poverty is unnecessary in the long run. The question is one of developing public and private policies which will generate conditions and implement programs and action to get at poverty.

The economic condition of Negroes in the rural South and in urban areas, North and South, in the 1920's and 1930's and the plight of the unemployed during the Great Depression were tragic, but economically speaking we had neither the technology, the know-how, nor the resources to effectively cope with these conditions. Such is not the case in 1966. Today, we have both the resources and the know-how to get at the problems of poverty and to engineer new prospects for relief from poverty conditions.

Having said these things I should like now to look more closely at economic prospects for the poor and the role of social scientists in social change. In 1947 29 percent of the white families and 67 percent of the

Negro families in the country lived in poverty according to current standards (adjusted for differences in the two periods). By 1962 poverty among white families had declined by 27 percent. Among Negro families it had declined by only 3 percent. Thus, during the 15-year period white families moved out of poverty at the rate of almost 2 percentage points per year while among Negroes the rate was about 1 percentage point every 5 years or 1/5 of a percentage point each year.

With about 45 percent of the Negro families in the United States continuing to live in poverty, and based on the rate of change given for the 15-year period, it will take another century for poverty among Negroes to be reduced to insignificant proportions. The major mitigating circumstances would be acceleration in public policy and affirmative action by private groups to generate more and better jobs for Negroes while eliminating those factors such as racial discrimination that perpetuate Negro workers in an occupational and industry structure which make adjustments to changes in technology and new opportunities difficult to come by.

To improve upon these prospects, it will be necessary to quicken breakthroughs in the fusion of political and economic power in many parts of the rural South that resist change from their feudal structure; more and better jobs for Negroes will have to be created in the private sector. In the rapidly growing area of public administration in local and state government, more Negroes will have to be absorbed.

A fundamental alteration in the occupational structure of the Negro labor force will have to be achieved. In one study we projected Negro employment by occupation through 1975. Based on the current occupational structure of the labor force, if Negroes hold the same proportion of each occupation in

1975 that they hold today, unemployment among Negroes could go as high as 17 percent and under-employment would be even more widespread. Teenagers, for example, constitute a particularly disturbing part of the process. A 19-year-old Negro in 1966 will be 28 years of age in 1975. In all probability he would have married and started a family. Today, one out of each four Negro teenagers is unemployed and many of those who are employed are in occupations whose obsolescence in a relatively short-run period is guaranteed.

As previously indicated, the major hope for improvement in benefits for the poor and in particular Negroes, most of whom are poor, lies in the area of public policy. It is also in the area of public policy that I think one of the most important roles for the social scientist in social change exists. We need to reach and sustain a full employment economy which by definition in my view would mean a job for everybody at a decent wage. We need to understand and know many things about our human resources which we do not know at the present time. Some us have suggested the need for a comprehensive human resource and manpower program. Some 75 percent of all the Negroes in the United States live in 70-odd cities. Just as was the case with Watts -- that programs have been held up because we know very little about the human resources component of Watts -- the same is true for most of the human resources of this country. It seems to me that it is in the area of public policy that social scientists have recently come to exert a major influence. Research more and more is oriented toward influencing the development and implementation of policy which will induce and achieve social change.